

NAME: Inouye, Hanayo DATE OF BIRTH: 1902 PLACE OF BIRTH: Hiroshima  
Age: 72 Sex: F Marital Status: W Education: High School

## PRE-WAR:

Date of arrival in U.S.: 8/1922 Age: 21 M.S. M Port of entry: San Fran.  
Occupation/s: 1. Picking grapes 2. Farm worker 3. Housewife  
Place of residence: 1. Elk Grove, Ca. 2. 3.  
Religious affiliation: Buddhist Church  
Community organizations/activities:

## EVACUATION:

Name of assembly center: Fresno, California  
Name of relocation center: Poston, Arizona  
Dispensation of property: Japanese school Names of bank/s:  
Jobs held in camp: 1. 2.  
Jobs held outside of camp:  
Left camp to go to: Sacramento, California

## POST-WAR:

Date returned to West Coast:  
Address/es: 1. Elk Grove, California 2.  
3.  
Religious affiliation: Buddhist Church  
Activities: 1. 2. 3.  
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: Deceased

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 9/26/74 Place: Elk Grove, Ca.

Translator: Toshi Kusonoki

NAME: Mrs. Hanayo Inouye  
AGE: Seventy-two (72)  
DATE OF BIRTH: 1902 (Meiji 35)  
PLACE OF BIRTH: Hiroshima-ken  
YEAR & AGE WHEN CAME TO THE U.S.: 1922, age 20  
MAJOR OCCUPATION: Self: housewife  
                            Husband: farmer  
RELOCATION CAMP: Poston, Arizona

Date of Interview: September 26, 1974  
Place of Interview: Elk Grove, California  
Interviewed by: Hei Takarabe  
Translated by: Toshi Kusunoki

NOTES

Numbers

- 1.....(the following continues) was five (5) years old, well, wages were low in Japan.
- 2.....(the following continues) had a farm with a white partner. We worked for Mr. Omaye on his farm.
- 3.....(the following continues) But, those who did work were paid sixteen dolloars (\$16.00) a month.
- 4.....(insert the following) It was just awful standing in line at mealtimes with dishes in our hands.
- 5.....(As is obvious in the response that follows, she misunderstood the question. Just to match the response, the question can be changed to read: "How did you people in the camp come to know that Japan was losing the war?")

a brief note from the interpreter:

Mainly because of the way she talks, I couldn't put several different stories in one paragraph as her response. That is why I decided to paragraph what she answered according to the stories. This is the first interview that I am doing this way. It it's acceptable, I'll be doing the rest of the interviews accordingly. Thank you and gokuro-sama.

Toshi Kusunoki

Q. What is your name?

A. Hanayo Inouye.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Hiroshima-ken.

Q. When were you born?

A. In 1902. So, I'm seventy-two (72) years old now.

Q. Will you tell us something about your parents?

A. My father came to the U.S. about four (4) times in all. As he came back to Japan, he spent five (5) years or so each time. Therefore, I grew up in a relatively comfortable, trouble-free family. Also my family could afford a nurse for me until I was five (5) years old, well, wages were low in Japan.

Q. He was a successful man, then?

A. Yes. For various reasons, the Alien Land Bill for one, he came back to Japan and stayed for five (5) years each time. He was there to build a new house and buy some land and so on. Mother was working on the farm with my grandfather. When my father came to the States for his first time, he became a schoolboy; attending children of a rich white family to and from their grammar school. Because of that he could speak very good English. Since a lot of people from Japan in those days did not speak a word of English, his bilingual ability was especially useful in helping the people find jobs. My husband, now deceased, was one of those people who were helped by my father, and used to say that he never thought of marrying a daughter of the man

who used to help him find a job. He also used to tell us that my father was a very gentle and kind person to everybody.

Here's another incident where my father was helpful. One time a friend of ours was coming back to Japan with his son. People on the ship soon started some sort of gambling. And, this son of his lost every penny he had earned in the U.S. Because of that he jumped into the ocean. His death was later notified to his family back in Japan. However, since it was in English, nobody in his family understood what it said. Then, my father, being back in Japan at the time, went over to this family and interpreted the letter for them. I still remember that.

Q. In what part of the States did he live?

A. All over the state of California. It turned out good that despite the low salary he became a school-boy, when he first came to the U.S. He learned what average school children from the first grade up are supposed to learn, and he used to say that that was why his English pronunciation was so good.

Q. When was it, do you know, that he was here in the States?

A. He was back in Japan one time, and was married then. After the first baby -- that's my older sister -- was born, he again came to the States and worked for about five (5) years. He was a very gentle man, and died young. Because of his good penmanship, he was asked by many people to write letters and notices for them and to record the names of guests at such occasions as funeral and wedding services. That made him well-known in the village and the people respected him for that, which was probably one of the reasons that he was elected

village-councilman when he came back to Japan permanently.

At the time when he heard the news that the second baby was to be born, he had a plan of his own in mind: If it was a boy, he would invite him to the U.S. when he grew to a certain age, and then later he would come back to Japan together with his son. However, since the second baby happened to be me, a girl again, his plan did not come true. When my sister and I were still young, we spent few years with our father. He was with us only when he came back occasionally. Speaking of my family, I have one older sister, one younger sister, and two younger brothers.

- Q. Do you have some other recollections about your father?
- A. From my own experiences here, I can tell that American farmers have less dirty things to handle in their daily life compared to the Japanese farmers. You see, when I was still young, the farmers in Japan used to make rounds early in the morning in the nearby cities, collecting human feces for fertilizer in their fields. Although my father was a village-councilman, needless to say he was not receiving enough salary for that to support the whole family. Farming was his main source of income. When I come to think of the point that he knew for himself how the American farmers lived, I cannot but admire him for coming back to the village to be a farmer there again. I still remember having a bull pull a cart -- every farmer family kept a bull in those days -- with barrels of human feces on it, I used to wait for him to come around at the foot of a steep slope which we had to cross to get back to our village. I couldn't do it just by myself. As I said

before, he impresses me in that he did come back home to work on the farm despite the fact that he knew for himself the kind of life that the American farmers enjoyed. I also remember that we had a big storehouse, where my family kept unhulled rice. As the time came when my father had to pay land-tax, for example, he would hull certain amount of rice and grind it so that he could sell it for cash. That's how he made taxes and other payments.

- Q. What is your educational background?
- A. My parents encouraged me to go to school. In fact my family was capable, if I wanted, to send me even to a college as in the case of one of my brothers who went to the then University of Tokyo. Anyway, after six (6) years in elementary school I went to high school for two (2) years. There I learned lots of things that women at the time were supposed to know, such as sewing, flower-arrangement, and so on. I didn't like those very much, to tell you the truth. I liked, instead, singing songs, doing all kinds of sports, and playing.
- Q. What did you do after your school? Helped your family?
- A. Yes, that's right. When I was a little girl, I was raised by my aunt, my father's younger sister. She had a son. Her husband and the son were also in the U.S., and sending money to support her. Now, having raised me since I was very little, she didn't want me to marry a total stranger to her when I became of age. She wanted to be close to me even after my marriage, which is not at all an unusual feeling for any parent in those days. Although her son was younger by one year than I was, her passions for me were so desperate that

she announced, when I was seventeen (17), that I was going to marry him. An official wedding ceremony as far as she was concerned was to be followed later on. She and my parents so decided without really consulting me. Their plan was to bring her son back to Japan at the age of twenty (20), and after getting married we were to come to the U.S. together. However, when he became twenty-one (21), he sent a letter to her mother -- my aunt, that is -- saying that he was working at a salmon cannery with his father, but he could not follow his father's path because he hated that work, and that he was going to go to school, and therefore, he would not be coming back to Japan for some time. That's what his letter said. Now, if I had to wait for him to come back, and not quite knowing when he would, I had to worry about getting old. Then, my aunt even suggested to adopt someone to marry me so that she could keep me within her reach. The idea was soon discarded, though.

In that year Mr. Inouye came back to Japan looking for his wife-to-be. Picture-marriage had been practiced for some time, but it only produced a lot of troubles with those couples, so some time later it was banned. It was all right, however, to come back to Japan, get married, and bring a bride to the U.S. And that's what Mr. Inouye had in mind. When he came home -- both of us come from the same town -- I learned that he was a very honest and serious man, and his family was doing very well. I always wanted to come to the U.S. then. There were some people who suggested, and helped, that I marry him. So we were married, although the

age difference was big. My aunt naturally was the last one to agree to our marriage. You see, she was even considering adopting someone to marry me, as I told you before. She cried and cried, as you can imagine. But, a lot of people talked her into the agreement at last. She really couldn't insist on her idea of marrying me to her son, because she didn't know for sure when he was coming back.

Q. How old were you when you were married?

A. I was twenty-one (21), and Mr. Inouye was forty-one (41). Because of the age difference, some of my relatives along with my aunt were opposed to our marriage. They said I was too young for him. Well, to me he was a fine man, and a man who made his fortune on his own. As a matter of fact, the Inouye's are a very, very well-to-do family back in our hometown now, owing to his hard work. Indeed he was even able to build a house on our wedding.

Q. I'm sure you were glad to marry Mr. Inouye.

A. Well, I was, but at the same time half of myself, so to speak, was so worried about my aunt. Well, I was glad in a sense that a long-cherished dream of mine had finally come true, you know, the dream of going to America.

Q. After getting married, you came over here right away, isn't that correct?

A. Yes, that's right. Our wedding ceremony was on July 28th, and on August 15th we were already on our way to the U.S. We landed at San Francisco, and then came to Elk Grove around September 21st or so, I recall. When we got there, the whole place was nothing but vineyards. Now there is a

park, a high school, and a lot of houses.

Q. How was your voyage to the U.S.?

A. We came on the Ten'yo-maru. On the way to Yokohama from Kobe, where we boarded, the sea was so rough that I became awfully seasick, which truly made me think that I was going to die. After all it was my first experience to be on such a big ship. Although I was all right after Yokohama, a lot of people suffered from a severe case of seasickness all the way. They threw up whatever they had eaten, and because of that they were having a hard time even to stand up on their own feet, you know. I can't forget how much I hated to go to a bathroom, for it was way upstairs and everytime I had to climb up steep steps to get there trying desperately not to fall off. Oh, it was really scarey. Another thing that bothered every one on board was the smell of paint. No such problem exists anymore, though.

Q. What kind of people do you remember were on the same ship with you?

A. Well, people like us, you know, who got married in Japan and coming over to the U.S. This was in 1922. At that time the picture-marriage was not allowed anymore. Like I said before, you could go back to Japan and bring your wife with you. Anyway, all I could see from the ship was just the blue sea, day after day. I kept wondering when in the world the voyage would be over. So, I was truly relieved when I saw seagulls flying over us. I was really glad to see them.

Q. Do you recall any incidents or happenings while on board?

A. Not particularly, other than that a lot of people got sea-

sick sick. You see, our beds were on racks. Well, one time someone asked for a comb, so I let her use mine. Then, when I combed my hair with it later, it became so itchy all over my head. There wasn't a good facility to wash my hair in the ship, so no sooner than we landed, I rushed to a drug-store, and took care of it. It was lice from her hair. The sanitary situation on the ships in those days was very poor.

Q. You talked about racks. Where, then, did your husband sleep?

A. He was in the men's section. Men slept in one section, and women in another, it was separated. We could spend daytime together, but we were separated through the night.

Q. When you got to San Francisco, how long did you stay there?

A. About three (3) days in San Francisco, and then we headed for Oakland. Now there is a bridge over the bay, but at the time we crossed it on a ferry-boat. From Oakland we came to Sacramento by train.

Q. What was your first impression of Elk Grove?

A. For some time I just kept wanting to go back home. Home is home . . . and I thought at the time that where I was born was the best place for me to be. However, I think I began to like it here for its vastness of the land, and for the fact that a day's work meant a day's earning. Back in Japan I never had to work for a living myself, and therefore, working for money was kind of foreign to me.

Well, speaking of money, it reminds me a little bit of my childhood. When I was still very small, I used to say to my father that I was going to be a very patient person when I grew up. It was my favorite pass time to go into the woods.

of nearby mountains and collect matsutake-mushrooms. I used to take my younger brother along with me, and join my friends -- well, usually six (6) or seven (7) of them altogether -- from the neighborhood. Along a narrow path in the mountains there were a lot of matsutake-mushrooms hidden under half way ground covered with fallen leaves, twigs and other things. Now, if I shouted, "I found them! I found a lot of them!" then everybody would come and pick them, naturally. I thought twice and wondered what to do. Oh, I think I was a bit ill-natured child then. I quickly ripped off a piece of lining of my cloth, threw it over to where I thought I found plenty of matsutake-mushrooms, and then said to my friends, "I want to go home now, everybody. Let's go home." Even now I think it was really an ill-natured deed to do. When we all came home, I headed back to the woods with my younger brother naturally looking for the piece of lining I threw, you see. Oh, there we found a lot of mushrooms. My brother and I didn't tell anybody about it and kept the place as our secret spot, so to speak. Also, we made sure that we picked the right size, and never small ones. That way everytime we went back there, there were right-size mushrooms ready to be picked. So my mother used to tell her friends and everybody else, "When my daughter goes out hunting matsutake-mushrooms, she always comes back with a lot of them." She also used to tell them, "And she lets us eat only the ones that have no heads, or the ones that don't look nice." That's true, because they were not meant to be consumed by my family, instead they were to be sold in nearby towns. So, I would go out in the streets and say, "Matsutake!" Matsutake!" and some

people would buy them. They are really fresh, and smell very good. Give me some." Sure they were fresh because they were right from the woods. The money I made on mushrooms like that went straight to my savings. Then, once in a while my father would say, "The tax is due today. But I am short of a little bit of money, just change." He needed, well, probably five (5) cents or up to fifteen (15) cents more to pay the full amount of the tax. In such occasions, I would tell him, "If you are ready to pay me some interest, I am ready to loan you how ever much you need." I was charging him interest like that, you see. I was saving all my money in a trunk that my father brought back from the U.S. That's where I kept my valuables. My older sister had one for herself, too. They were kept in the family storehouse.

Here's another one that I made my savings from. That's eels. You see, you have to get the water our of the rice paddies during summer. Then, when you don't have water there, it's easy to get in and just catch eels. There were a lot of them in the rice paddies. I was kind of a mischievous girl, when I come to think of it now. They are very slippery, you know. So I used to get some cucumber leaves, and grab them. That's how you do it. I put them in a bucket, and went out selling them in a neighborhood town. The people would say, "They are big and fresh. I'll buy some." Then, again, the money was added to my savings in the trunk. It was a lot of fun.

It so happened very quickly that I was to leave my home and come to the U.S. It certainly surprised my mother very much. By then, I had saved some in the trunk. It's wasn't much money,

but even so, it was a lot. I knew that I could not bring Japanese money to the U.S. with me. My husband told me that once before. So, when we were at the Hiroshima train station, I handed all my savings over to my mother and said, "Here's what I have saved until today. Put it in the postal savings for my younger brother and sister. They can share it between them." With tears in her eyes, she then said, "Are you really giving it to them? I know you worked hard saving it. Well, then, I'll give it to them, and make sure to let them know that it's from their older sister. Sure, I'll take care of it for you." She must have been very surprised, because like she says, she knew I was saving it diligently, and then all of a sudden, I decided to give all of it to them. She was crying.

When I was leaving the station, she said, "I am going to miss you very much when you leave. But, I'll always be with you. We won't be separated even for a moment." First, I did not know what she was talking about. Later, in Kobe, when I was undressing myself to go to sleep, I understood what she meant. I found a piece of the Buddhist altar ornament in the breast of my kimono. I was so sad when I left her at the station that I didn't know it was there. When I found it I thought she was after all my mother.

I have another memory of her that I still clearly recall. She made me beautiful kimonos when I became of marriageable age. But I never got to put them on even once. She wanted me to wear them when I became a real bride, you see. Indeed, Japanese people, and the parents especially, had a certain discipline in those days. She made me kimonos and also beautiful obi-sashes,

but never allowed me to put them on. She used to tell me, "When you become a bride, neighbors will look forward to seeing you wear new kimonos everyday. This one today, that one the next day . . . You have to wait until then." Of course, as you can imagine, I was dying to put those beautiful kimonos on. Well, naturally she, or anybody for that matter, was not expecting me to leave home so quickly, which I did. Later, she wrote me a letter about it. "I am sorry that I didn't let you put them on while you were here. I know very well that you wanted to so much." You know, in Japan they do summer airings of kimonos and other clothes every midsummer. She said in the letter, "I was airing your kimonos today, and my tears stained parts of them. I'm very sorry." For quite a long time after I came here, I was thinking of my mother at every moment. In fact when I cut my finger as I was picking grapes, I shouted, "Mom!" quite unconsciously.

Q. What did you do when you came to Elk Grove?

A. I picked grapes.

Q. Did Mr. Inouye have his house then?

A. No. Not many people had their own houses in those days.

The Omaye's, who came here a little bit earlier than we did, had a farm with a white partner. We worked for Mr. Omaye on his farm.

When I arrived in Sacramento, we took a taxi to Elk Grove. My husband said, "We are going to the country. You better not put good things on."

Q. Were you wearing a kimono?

A. No, no, it wasn't a kimono, but yet I was in my best clothes.

Anyway, when we got to the farm, Mr. Omaye showed me the way around, and said, "Please make yourself comfortable in here." I couldn't be surprised more! A hay which was spread in a square shape with a partition! Just a straw-hay, that was all there was in there!

Q. Was that in a barn?

A. Yes, it was a barn, in a corner of the barn. I certainly could not feel like taking off my clothes to have a rest there. I never felt more distressed than at that time in my whole life. My husband should have let me know about such conditions before I left Japan. He showed me some pictures of him in suits, and of nothing but the best sceneries. Naturally, I thought I was coming to a really nice place when I left Japan. Also, I might have taken it differently then, had I been raised in a less fortunate family. But, I was not. Like I told you earlier, I was living an easy life since I was a little girl, owing much to my father's hard work. After all, I couldn't feel like sleeping there at all.

I asked my husband where a taoilet was. He pointed outside. It was out in the field. He then told me to hit the toilet with a stick or something at first before going in. I wondered why, you know. There were black spiders living in it, and that was why. As a matter of fact, many people were bit by those black spiders, and I heard someone died of fever caused by the spider bites. I was quite scared of the place. I realized, however, no matter how much I thought of my mother back in Japan, or of anybody, it wouldn't do any good. I knew then I had to live with it, and give it a try. Then I told myself I was going

back home as soon as I made some fortune here.

Q. Did you sleep on the hay that night?

Q. Yes, that's right, I did. Whether or not I cried about it, there was nothing I could do about it. There wasn't any other place to sleep in. I spread a blanket over it, though. You know, in those days everyone had his own blanket with him wherever he went . . . rolled up, and with a rope tied around it. The whole place was so scary to me. There were potato sacks hanging down over the window. If it were a screen window instead, it would have been a little bit better. In the middle of the night, all of a sudden, I heard terrifying cries. I screamed, "My God! What's that? What happened?" Next thing I saw were two horses right next to me, sticking their heads out like this. You can imagine I was scared to death. My first night here was like that . . . coming all the way from Japan. Nothing could be done however and I cried.

When I was still a girl, I used to do a lot of mischievous things. On my way back from school, for example, I would steal some grapes from the neighbor's grapevines, pulling them over with a stick. I didn't even care if they were not ripe yet then. Now, in Elk Grove as I came into the vineyards to work, I was truly overwhelmed at the fine grapes then . . . really fine, ripen, red tokay grapes. What came to my mind first then was that it would be so wonderful if I could give some to my mother. Growing grapes was not that much popular where I came from. So I kept thinking how much she would appreciate it, and how much my brother would love to taste them. My mind was not with what my hands were doing, besides I had no experience

in picking grapes. Pretty soon I cut my finger with the clippers by accident. I didn't know what to do. Then, my husband came running to me and he squeezed fresh juice out of some grapes, and rubbed it on my finger. It works very well, you know. Then I wrapped it with my handkerchief. Even after that I had to keep working. It couldn't be an excuse to stop working. I kept telling my husband there, "I want to go back. Let me go home." But, he just said, "It's going to be all right."

He was a good worker, and indeed worked very hard. He had to work harder than usual that day to make up for my loss and also to be liked by our boss. So, we made sure to keep pace with the other pairs. In the vineyards we all worked in pairs -- even though I was just standing by his side and crying.

When the grape season was over that year, the boss said, "This is how much you worked," and he gave me a lot of money. I was, frankly, surprised. You see, I never worked in my life before. Although there were times when I went out to the streets selling matsutake-mushrooms and eels, it really didn't count as work as such. I helped my family during rice planting seasons and harvest times, but again, I was not working for money. So, that year was a big surprise to me.

The kind of food we had while working in the vineyards was rather good, at least better than what we had back in Japn. In Japan, in our time, we lived on wheat and a little bit of rice. I know that hardly anyone eats wheat any more these days. Also, we girls were instructed by our parents to get used to wheat so that we could endure possible hardships we might encounter upon marrying and living with his family. Oh, I didn't like

wheat at all, in fact, I hated it. Whereas, boys were treated differently, with a lot of love and care. That's Japan, you know. My younger brother was always served first at the meal table, and he always had rice only. After that, the rice was mixed with a lot of wheat, and then everyone else was to be served. Hearing me talk about it, Don now tells me that's why I am healthy. He kids me by saying the wheat diet kept me healthy thus far. I laugh about it, but I guess he may be right. Wheat is very good for your health, isn't it? Anyway, that's Don's version of why I have been so healthy. In the case of my family, the first two children born were girls, and therefore, my younger brother, the first son of the family, was given a special attention and care. When I complained too much about wheat, my mother then switched to potatoes. Potatoes grew very well over there. What she did was, again, serving only rice to my brother, and then mixing potatoes and rice together to serve the rest of us. At first I didn't like potatoes very much, now I like them, though. Especially, they are delicious over here. So, when I think of all these things, I must admit that the food over here has been very good. I was served different meals each time, you know. And I was even getting paid for my work. So, I was really surprised.

Q. How much did you get paid in those days?

A. I think they called it something like grape-time wages, and it was three dollars (\$e.00) a day. That's ten (10) hours a day, though. I believe I worked for forty (40) days there in that season. Everyone had to pay fifteen cents (50¢) for the meals. However, since I did the dishes after every meal, they didn't charge me that fifty-cents meal expense. I guess it was some-

thing like a tip. Well, I think I have to thank my mother for that. She sort of disciplined me to do the dishes, and I just took it for granted that the women are always supposed to do it. I think I got paid as much as my husband, except that he was also in charge of horses when shipping out the grapes, and because of that he was making three fifty (\$3.50) a day. To feed and to take care of the horses he usually had to get up earlier than most of us. That's why. From that experience, I thought to myself and decided that as long as I worked hard in the U.S. enduring whatever hardships I might have to take, then it would be possible to save enough money and go back to Japan.

When all the work was over for the season, we went to a boarding house called the Hiroshima-ya, and waited for the next job.

Q. Did you go to the Hiroshima-ya, too?

A. Yes, it was in a sense our home. Big trunks and other belongings of ours were all kept at the Hiroshima-ya. We had to stay there when there was no work for us to do. Therefore, some people eventually suffered from accumulated meal expenses as the days of no work went by. Well, those people were referred to a job whenever there was one--given top priority.

It was winter already, the first winter for me here, and I can't forget how hard it was to live though that particular winter. There was work at a nursery in Newcastle. Just about this tall peach trees, pear trees, and other kinds . . . The roots were wide spread, though they were cut off by a horse-drawn cutter of some kind. We had to get up early in the morning. Although I knew well I had to eat something--we used to eat

miso soup for breakfast -- so that I could work that day, that morning I didn't have much of an appetite. So I went to work without any breakfast. The boss told us to get in a line and to pull out those seedling trees.

Q. Pulling by hands, you mean?

A. Yes, that's right. The roots of those trees were not completely cut as they were supposed to, and consequently, they were very hard to pull from the ground. You had to pull them very hard, you know. Whether you were a man or a woman it just didn't make any difference, you just had to do the job. The women were not treated any differently from the men. Since I didn't have my breakfast, oh, I was so hungry. How I wished that there were some bread around on the ground! Or anything I could eat! The work started very early in the morning, around seven o'clock (7:00), and I had to get up before six (6:00) for that. I don't think I can ever forget how hard it was for me those days.

Q. What kind of saplings did you work with?

A. Peaches and other kinds. Though they were not fully grown, they were tall, not like the ones in a garden. I would say those saplings were as I was, and those ranches would range over ten (10) acres, or maybe more than twenty (20) acres. The orders were shipped out by train.

Q. And your job was to pull them out one by one?

A. Yes. My husband and I helped each other so that we would not fall behind the rest of the crew.

Q. So, somebody followed the crew picking up the saplings?

A. Yes, that's right. Since there were a lot of different kinds of them in the ranch, they had to put name tags on the bundles

of each kind. At any rate, truly I don't think that I can ever forget how hard that work was. One thing was that I was getting hungry. If the work itself was less hard, then I might have been in a little bit better shape. Even drinking water wasn't that easily available. Well, there was a break at ten o'clock (10:00), when you could go and get yourself some water. Other than that, the boss was constantly watching us walking down the rows back and forth. I was getting hungrier and hungrier, and it made me worry that I might not be able to eat lunch. Because, you know, when you get really too hungry, somehow you lose all your appetite. I worried about becoming sick. I think I was getting pale, which made my husband worry, too. Until then I really had not done any hard work as such, you see. Picking grapes wasn't that bad in that respect. The work at the sapling ranch was just about all we could find during winter. Later on we moved to olive trees. The leaves were frosted. The most difficult part of that work for me was to climb up a twelve-step ladder. If I didn't watch out for my steps well, just a little bit of carelessness could have gotten me a broken leg or something right away.

Q. How many weeks did you work at the sapling ranch?

A. For about three (3) weeks, I suppose. I will never forget how hungry I was at the ranch. It makes me wonder sometimes how a human being is. When you have enough, you tend to waste it. When I have to throw away anything, I do it with a sort of guilt feeling, you know, I feel guilty for not eating it all. If I have a dog, maybe it will help, I mean, I may not have to waste anything. Really, was I hungry at the ranch! The roots were

supposed to be cut before we started pulling out the saplings. Once I said, "They didn't cut the roots well in my row." Then somebody replied, "Not in my row, either!" So, I figure everybody was having the same problem. Not everything I did in this country was easy.

Then, in March we worked on hops. When one kind of work was over, we all went back to the Hiroshima-ya. We met Mr. Ken'ichi Oki of Ofu-Nippo (The Sacramento Daily), who also owned a big farm, and he told us that there was work in his hop fields. My husband and I went there with another couple, Mr. and Mrs. Horita, who happened to be from Hiroshima, also. When we got there, we had a house to live in. It wasn't a good house in any sense, but at least there was a house for us. We stayed there through the whole season, till the end of harvest.

Here's a funny story. Mrs. Horita and I took turns for cooking meals. Having come over here earlier, she was a good cook when I met her. Whereas, I learned everything from my husband. There wasn't a stove in those days as we have now. We had to first build fire wish bushes, and put frying pan on it. That's how we fixed pancakes in the morning. Now, when it was my turn to cook for everybody, I tried my best that morning to follow the instructions that my husband taught me. Then when it was done, I called the Horita's to have breakfast. When I cut my pancakes with a knife and fork, the white batter came out. The outside was good and brown, but the inside was not done yet. Oh, my husband got furious. Sorry, but how should I know that well! If I only had the right kind of

stove, I could have done better, maybe. Also I wished I had known how to cook pancakes in Japan. I never knew what they looked like before I came over here. So, my husband took over and started cooking all over again. He said, "Never mind looks," or something like that, but his pancakes then came out half burnt. He made the fire too strong as he did it in a great hurry. Because, when you are hired by the hour, well, then you work by the hour, and also not everyone was an early riser in the morning. That's why he hurried so much. Yet, we all knew too well that we couldn't work with an empty stomach. So we ate then and went out to work.

My husband was tying something from on a horse, where there were wires running across high up in the air. While I was on the ground chopping off all the old stems, except two. Then I was supposed to put sticks in at their roots. This is in early part of March. Also, I had to make sure the ropes were straight and tight enough. To do all that I had to look up from time to time. Now, before I left Japan I was pretty white. After some days of work like that, I was really surprised at myself. I got sun tanned all over my face, and I look really dark, you see. If I had a big hat on it might have been different. All I could find then was a bonnet or something of that sort. Being fresh from Japan, I knew nothing about those things. If I were to work in that kind of situation again, I will make a good hat myself.

We stayed there for quite a while, and made a good amount of money. They paid us at the very end of the season. I kind of wondered why then. The reason was that the Oki's had, for

some reason, a poor harvest in the previous year and couldn't make an anticipated money on hops. Those workers who were single got paid earlier than we did, because it wasn't that much to pay to each of those people. Couples like us had to wait for a while, because as a couple we were making good money. Instead of paying us in cash, they gave us tomatoes, peaches, and plums to live through the season. Mrs. Oki decided that the farming there was bad enough and left for Los Angeles, leaving her three (3) children back home. When she did, I was asked to cook for them. Like I told you, I knew very little about cooking. One thing that kept me from further problems was that the children ate Japanese food. Fixing miso soup for breakfast wasn't difficult. As for lunch, Mrs. Oki told me to buy fish from a fish peddler and cook them. I didn't like the job at all, but I had no other choice.

Q. When was it? Was it around the Depression?

A. No, before the depression. As the days went by, the plum price got better, and we workers were finally paid. It made me feel really happy. Here's another story you might be interested in. Back in Japan our family had quite a lot of land, and a new house which we built before we left there. Yet, we knew that Japan was such a country where everyone was always short of cash. So we took our earnings and savings to the Sumitomo Bank--it used to be on fourth (4th) street--and send them to Japan. I sent two thousand dollars (\$2,000). The exchange rate at that time was double, and so we were able to send four thousand yen (¥4,000) after all. However, when I come to think of it, it kind of drives me crazy. After all those hardships and

difficulties, it was only double. I thought at the time it was quite a big amount of money over here, but then Japan changed so rapidly. For example, the rate now is about three hundred yen (¥300) to a dollar, and everything is so expensive because of inflation. The money we sent was kept in the bank until this last time when I visited Japan. The cost of living was incredibly high. For example, just one set of kimono would cost anywhere around a hundred thousand yen (¥100,000). In fact, a hundred thousand yen didn't buy me much of anything.

The money that I saved after all the hard work . . . and cooking for a lot of people I hated the job. Inside my sash I kept the receipt which the bank gave me when I sent the money to Japan; as we were going to the Assembly Center in June. I still remember the sweat stains on the receipt from the hot summer days. It was that kind of money, you see. And yet, the value dropped just tremendously, which I never thought would happen.

Q. When you withdrew in Japan the money you sent through the bank, how much had it become?

A. Quite a lot. It was, after all, forty (40) some years later. Probably more than double of the original amount deposited.

Q. And yet, I suppose even the doubled amount was less in actual value than the original two thousand dollars (\$2,000)?

A. Oh, sure, by far it was less. When I withdrew it, it had become a hundred thousand or so yen. But again, like I said earlier, a hundred thousand yen nowadays isn't that much in Japan. The reason I went back to Japan this last time was to attend a wedding of one of my brothers' children. Naturally I

wanted a kimono for the occasion. But one set of kimono was all I could buy with that money. As the saying goes, you cannot beat change of the time and crying babies.

Speaking of the kinds of work we did in those days . . . once the Takeoka's said that they wanted to teach their children how to far and left for Los Angeles. At that time we rented their vineyards for about one year. There were two pumps, one near the house where we lived and the other in the vineyards to water the fields. One afternoon my husband did not come back for lunch. So I went out looking for him in the fields. I found him working on a water pump at a well. The pump was placed on two pieces of boards, together with a tractor on it for power. I saw that the well was really deep. It scared me when I thought of him falling into the well by accident. It was such a difficult job. Both of us worked hard there. Because of such conditions, we soon started thinking of moving on to other work.

Luckily, news reached us that the Robinson's in Mayhew were looking for experienced plum workers. When we got there, my husband was told to show how well he could do a prunning job. He immediately started prunning grapevines. A hundred-acre ranch there had around six (6) different kinds of grapes, in addition to walnut and olive trees. After some time that day, I guess my husband proved reliable to them for he was told to come back the next day. Since then we worked for the Robinson's for quite a while. My husband did his job very faithfully and became a foreman there. We worked at four (4) to

six (6) rate. Forty-per-cent (40%) of the income from the ranch was to go to the Robinson's, and we received the rest--sixty-per-cent (60%). Therefore, if we worked hard by ourselves, and by not hiring any helping hands, we were able to make some profit. It was around the Depression time, and the price of grapes was pretty bad. There were times when grape sales resulted in the red. At that time women were getting paid one fifty (\$1.50) a day for ten (10)hours of work. For men it was two dollars (\$2.00). Like I said, as the sales weren't good, we had a hard time.

It was especially hard in those days for those who were doing business on their own. A family, for instance, that used to run a vegetable store on Riverside said they had not had meals for days because of the high cost of rice. So, some of us who had less problems brought one cup of rice from each family to the Japanese School. It was the time when farm produce was so cheap that farmers had to suffer almost inevitable debts from shipping their produce out. Lots of people had a problem feeding their families. We were very fortunate in that respect, for the Robinson's had a lot of land, and our income was somewhat guaranteed.

Q. Tell us some more about bring a cup of rice to the school.

A. Teachers there collected rice from everyone that could afford doing so and distributed the rice to needy families. I heard such stories as Mrs. so and so, when visited by the teachers, was so moved that she cried hugging them. For donating families, it was one cup of rice a family. Some of them could afford two cups or three cups or maybe more, and they

did so. My family usually donated one coffee can of rice. We could afford it because although our food expenses were deducted, our total budget was still in good shape.

Q. How often was this rice distribution done?

A. Once a week on Saturdays. Besides rice, donation of canned goods was also appealed for from time to time.

My husband used to work in the fields all day long until dark. One afternoon, however, he came back from work and picked up a newspaper. Then he said, "I'm going to the bank." Right away, the next day, the bank closed. The very next day! He used to read the papers every night after work and was probably thinking about it while working in the fields. He withdrew everything we had in the bank. Then, we wondered where to keep it, for our house wasn't a good one. And besides it was obvious that we would lose everything if a fire should break out. We had one of those big tea cans -- the Japanese students in those days used to peddle tea around the neighborhood -- and put all the valuables of our family in it and decided to bury it underground. Well, one day, my children came home from school and said, "What's happening here?" The bills that we buried in the tea can got wet, so I was putting them side by side on the bed to dry them.

The war was about to break out. We happened to live less than five (5) miles from the airport in Marysville. Those who lived within the five-mile limit had to move out of there. We used to send two of our sons to a kendo school. My husband bought each of them a brand new set of equipment for kendo.

Now, when we learned that the FBI were soon coming to search our house, we thought that they might decide we were pro-Japan, if they found the kendo equipment in our house. So one night my husband got up and dug a hole in the ranch to bury them. We couldn't burn the, because it would be obvious to anybody what we were doing. The equipment were still pretty new then. We knew that even possession of photographs of the Emperor could be a cause of detention in the FBI's eyes and helping the Japanese School was another. Being bilingual my husband naturally had been helping the school.

When the FBI did come to our house, Mr. Robinson told them, "This Inouye family has been here with us for many years. I will guarantee you that they are not questionable people in any sense." Then the FBI left. Actually it was clear that if my husband were arrested for whatever charge, it would have gotten more difficult for Mr. Robinson to continue his farm. He was a public employee himself. At any rate we were lucky that my husband was never arrested.

Q. Well, going back a little bit, you worked for the Robinson's during the Depression and until before the war, didn't you?

A. Yes, that's right. We worked there for about thirteen (13) years altogether.

Q. As the days went by, the relationship between the U.S. and Japan began deteriorating, didn't it?

A. That's right and because of that our children couldn't go to school if it was too far.

Q. Was it after the outbreak of the war?

A. Yes.

Q. How was it before that, then?

A. The exclusion feelings against the Japanese were beginning to mount before the war.

Q. Did you experience any hard times caused by the anti-Japanese sentiments?

A. No, not really. Living on the Robinson's farm, we were somewhat in seclusion, so to speak, and so relatively free from being directly subjected to such anti-Japanese sentiments of the time. The only problem we had was that five-mile limit which I talked about before. So we moved to a new place, which was about ten (ten) miles from the airport. All that time the Robinson's were very kind to us as though we were real brothers and sisters. Then, soon after we moved to the new place, it was the time when all the Japanese people, Issei's and Nisei's, had to face the evacuation order. At that time, we went back to the old house where we used to live and stayed there for a while, because the washing machine was there. Right then, the FBI visited us again and started searching the trunks we had.

My husband had such a hard time back in Japan. He had to borrow a lot of money to come to the U.S. His father's health was not very good, and they had a lot of children in the family. At the age of sixteen (16), he came over here to help out his family in Japan. Contrary to his hope, he couldn't send any money back for quite a while for he was going to grammar school for about four (4) years. After that, he started working in sugarbeets and also worked on railroad among many other things. He said that at that time he was making one dollar (\$1.00) a day, so that is, thirty dollars (\$30.00) a month. From then he

was sending twenty dollars (\$20.00) back home out of his thirty-dollar (\$30.00) monthly earning. All of the receipts of the remittances he made were kept in a trunk and the FBI found a lot of those receipts.

- Q. When the war started how many children did you have?
- A. Eoight (8) children. We were then still at the Robinson's.
- Q. How did you feel when you heard of the Pearl Harbor attack?
- A. It was on December 7, in the morning . . . My children wanted a radio for a long time and two days before December 7 we bought them one. I think they were so happy about it that they got up early in the morning and were listening to it. At seven o'clock (7:00) they came rushing to me and said, "Mom, it's a war!" I asked, "What are you talking about?" I just couldn't believe it. All of us were really surprised at the news. Nothing has ever surprised us more than that. We were somewhat aware that something strange was taking place between the two countries in that China was getting everything from the U.S. while Japan was not. So we knew something was wrong and that if worse came to worse, something big might happen.
- Q. When the evacuation order came the Japanese people could not move around more than a five-mile radius. Wasn't that right?
- A. Yes, that is right. Other restrictions were put on us before that because our house was located close to the airport. Like I told you before, we had to move to the new house. A big family like ours . . . lots of belongings . . . We certainly didn't want to move.
- Q. And when the final evacuation notice came, you went back to your old house before going to a camp, did you say?

A. Yes. Because we left a lot of stuff such as stoves and other things. Just clothing we had a lot of having eight (8) children at the time, five (5) boys and three (3) girls. There were a lot of other things, too. However, we didn't bring them along with us, instead we left most of them at the Japanese school. When we came back from the camp believing that everything, including Emiko's piano, would be there as we left them, nothing was left there. Someone had set a fire to the school as the "Japs were coming back."

Q. At the Robinson's what time do you say you used to get up in the morning?

A. By six o'clock (6:00).

Q. And then cooked breakfast?

A. Yes. And my husband, getting up at around five-forty (5:40), would go and take care of the horses so that everyone could begin working at seven o'clock (7:00). We had about eight (8) workers working for us then, so I had to get up early.

Q. And you cooked for all of them, including those eight?

A. That's right, I did. When there were some wives working together with their husbands, they would help me. We charged everybody fifty cents (50¢) for the meals, and therefore, our meals were free.

Q. Did you also work in the fields?

A. Yes, I used to go out to work in the fields after all the kitchen work was done.

Q. What time did you come back from work in the evening?

A. I had to be back by four-thirty (4:30) to prepare supper by six (6:00). I was also in charge of preparing the bath every

evening.

Q. A goyemon type?

A. Yes. I used wood to build a fire for that.

Q. I suppose you had to do the laundry for everyone, didn't you?

A. Yes. I had Emi and Hatsuye help me hang the clothes on the line before they left for school. During the winter when the grapevines and plum trees were all pruned, they put their aprons on -- they were seven (7) or eight (8) years old at the time -- and went out to the orchards collecting those branches. They sure helped me a lot. All my children did a lot of other things when they were still very young, and that's why they are all hard-working and doing well now. They were trained that way, you see. Now-a-days, children just don't do anything like it.

Q. So, you had to do the cooking, the dishes, the laundry . . . ?

A. That's true. I also had to see to it every night that everyone took a bath, and I was required to keep the fire burning until the last person. In those days, therefore, I never went to bed before eleven (11:00). My husband used to fill a wash tub with fresh hot water before anybody took a bath and gave a bath to our little ones. You have to wash babies in clean water, you see. Anyhow, all the men there went to bed early and when I was ready to go to sleep, my husband would wake up and say, "Oh, is it dawn already?" Then I would tell him, "No, no. I'm going to sleep now." I don't know how I did all these things, but I certainly did survive those days.

One thing I kept in mind all the time was not to let my children live in discomfort in any way. My husband and I were

determined to send them through school at any cost. But as the days went by, they said they didn't like school since their English was not improving. The reason for it was that they had to change schools so often because while we worked in one field in one place, they went to a school there. And then when we moved to another place, they had to go to another school and continue their schooling. That was why they were not quite up with their study. (INTERRUPTION)

When the war ended we were invited to come back and work for the Robinson's again. However, what was in the mind of my husband was that the time was for our children to continue their schooling, some of them were already of high school age and eventually the question of going to college came up. If we stayed here, we knew our children could go to colleges of their choosing. So my husband was not quite willing to go back to the Robinson's. That was when Mr. Satow invited us to stay with his family. He is truly a kind man. I can say he must be a true Christian. You see, he had nine (9) children of his own. Who would do the same as he did for us? At that time Kanji was working at the Center, and Takaji received a scholarship upon graduating from high school, representing Sacramento. He used to go to school half-heartedly saying since the war had started, anything could happen, and so what was the use of studying. He would find a lot of other excuses not to take it seriously in school. But in the end he straightened himself out and studied very hard to the point where his teacher thought he was entitled to a scholarship. I'm proud

of him. One thing that troubled us was that, probably because of the kind of scholarship he was granted, he could not go to a college here, and instead he went to Detroit. It meant a loss to us during the harvest seasons. While Takaji went to Detroit to go to college there, his older brother also went over there, although he had only a high school diploma, to work for some pepper company. Out of the savings he made while working for the company, he put himself through a school of electric engineering of some kind in Detroit.

When Takaji turned to eighteen (18), he was going to be drafted. Again and again, my husband proved his smartness in handling the matter. At that time there was a funeral service at the Center almost everyday for those who were killed in action overseas. Therefore, I was very much reluctant to see Takaji going to the service at that particular time. I knew he had to go one way or another but the question was when. The army then was looking for someone who could speak Japanese to be an interpreter. So, he volunteered for it, which meant that he had to further study the language for some time. That's how my husband went around buying extra time for our son. He was then sent to Poston, Arizona to learn Japanese. After that language program he was stationed in Japan. Shortly afterwards Japan surrendered, so he really didn't have to fight in any actual combat situations. The case would have been different had he joined a combat unit right when he was drafted. That's how my husband was a father to him. Because of this arrangement my son had to leave Poston but at the same time he was quite safe. (INTERRUPTION)

Q. Lots of people suffered, even those who had their own land, didn't they?

A. Yes, that's true. Just about everybody suffered. This property used to belong to Mr. Nakashima. Since had this in an Issei's name, he had to (INAUDIBLE). So when we bought it from him, it was quite cheap. Our son spent some time looking for a nice piece of property. As he found this place where everything is still very much what Elk Grove used to be like, we decided to settle down here. Some people laughed at us when they learned that we bought a piece of land, and they thought we must be out of our minds, because it was when land in Issei's names were taken away. With us everything went fine. After the 442 proved the loyalty of Japanese people, the Issei's were then granted the right to land ownership. The oldest son was in Detroit, as I told you before, working on electric engineering. We told him to come home when he turned to twenty-one (21) and register our property in his name.

Q. What camp did you go?

A. First, we were sent to Fresno and then to Arizona. Our final destination was Camp II.

Q. How long did you stay in Fresno?

A. Not for long. Probably two to three months, I think it was.

Q. How did you feel there?

A. At first it was a bit strange. Fresno was still kind of close, and I had been there from time to time before that. So, I didn't have any particular feelings about Fresno. We all took a train to get there. Besides the baggage I took, I had trouble with my children. A train ride was new to them, and so

they kept running around on the train.

Q. Did you have any difficulties in Fresno?

A. Well, in Fresno . . . no, not really.

Q. How long did you stay in the camp?

A. Until it was closed down.

Q. Did Mr. Inouye work while in the camp?

A. Yes. I think he was making cement.

Q. How about you?

A. Having a lot of children to look after, I didn't do any work. Those who did work were paid sixteen dollars (\$16.00) a month. I took a sewing class for a while. Mr. Kitaga and Mr. Satow went to Colorado from the camp, and I think they were working in radish fields. Our oldest son and one of Deguchi's boys went there to work with them. I think they made quite a bit of money. My son sent us his money from there.

Q. What was the most difficult thing in the camp?

A. It was awfully hot out there. I used to soak my feet in a bucket of water. It was just awful standing in line at meal time with dishes in our hands. Also, when the wind was a little bit too much, a terrible dust storm came along with it. It was one of the biggest problems. However tight we shut the doors and windows, the dust came in the house and all over the inside. We were Japanese after all -- no one spent lazy days. Some people planted various kinds of trees in the yard, and between the trees we grew vegetables and other things. When we first came to the camp, we all wondered what was going to happen to us. But when we were leaving, people were even saying living in the camp was better than

where they came from. The trees grew very big by then, and we could find nice shade under them and everything.

A lot of parents, I for one, had a problem feeding our babies as we wanted. Generally speaking, food in the camp was pretty good, but yet we couldn't get hold of our kind of baby food. For instance, our son, Ben lost so much of his weight and turned so pale that I thought he might be dying. It worried me a lot. Coming back from the camp, my husband grew a lot of spinach out here for him. Until that time the shortage of fresh produce was a big problem. Isn't spinach a healthy vegetable? Pretty soon Ben started regaining his normal color on his face. Now he is the tallest and best-built in the whole family.

Like I said before, food was generally good in the camp. However, there were such rumors as they would refuse to give us any food when the U.S. was on the losing side of the war. So, the women in the camp took turns by units to collect left-over bread everyday. We dried what we collected that day on a piece of board under the burning sun, and because of the unbelievable heat from the sun the bread became almost like well-toasted bread. We, then, kept it in big paper bags.

Q. Oh, so it was all kept for later use?

A. Yes, because no one was able to tell what the outcome of the war would be day by day. No one would believe such news as the Japanese ships were all surrounded and sunk for Japan had never lost a war before. People said that if the U.S. started losing the war and no more food would be supplied to us because of it, the stored bread would help us survive the crisis. That's as far as we went in precautionary steps in those days in the camp.

Anyway, four (4) women assigned themselves everyday to turn over the bread during the afternoon and store it in the kitchen space when it was well dried. We did it everyday. I remember those days clearly now. Leaving my children at home I had to do that job. Therefore, even women were working like that in the camp. Everybody worked, indeed.

I remember some cheese being supplied to us. It was truly delicious. As far as the food was concerned the situation was surprisingly good. However, we had to live under constant pressure and out of fear of the thought that it might all stop one day.

Q. Have you thought at any point during the camp that you might be killed?

A. No, that kind of thought never occurred to me. It gave me very uneasy and uncomfortable feelings, however, to see the guards watching us from the tower, besides we were all fenced in. I couldn't take my eyes off my children for even a moment so that they would not go outside the fence. The guards were to shoot anyone that did. So it was very much uneasy days.

I remember there was a church . . . (INAUDIBLE)

Q. Didn't you have trouble, say, doing your laundry, for example?

A. No. There was a large space for it. If I could time myself to do it early in the morning, there was no problem.

Q. The living quarters in the barracks were right next to each other, weren't they?

A. Yes.

Q. You could hear everything of the next door neighbors, right?

A. Yes, everything.

Q. You didn't have much privacy, then?

A. Well, no. Children making noises . . . One good thing was that

houses were assigned in such a way that families with a lot of children would be living in one section of the camp. For instance, my next door neighbor had nine (9) children.

Q. How many rooms did you have?

A. We had two for our family. And each person had a canvas-made cot bed to himself.

Q. That was one bedroom and a living room?

A. Yes, that's right. Since a family didn't have to have a kitchen space, having two rooms was not that bad at all. We could manage it.

Q. Did all your children sleep in these two rooms?

A. Yes. Since the beds weren't big, I could pack them nicely side by side, you know. One of the problems with the children was they often got into fights with their playmates from the neighborhood, most of them being in the same age group. We also had a problem with rattle-snakes and scorpions. I heard that someone who was married for only a short while died of a scorpion bite. If it were not in the camp, perhaps his life could've been spared.

As for the men some of them would go to a mountain looking for nicely shaped pieces of wood, and they made lots of wooden decorations. One night a fire started from a chicken incubator which was located near our house. Since it was during the middle of night, and besides all our neighbors had many children, it was such a riot.

Q. Do you recall having any fun time in the camp?

A. No, not really.

Q. I understand there was a question of loyalty oath. What did you think about it?

A. When that question was brought up some long time friends had to fight with each other. My husband and I thought that since our children were born in the U.S., we would sign 'Yes.' Then some people accused us by saying, "What kind of fool are you to say 'Yes' to a country that's treating us like this?" Oh, they were angry at us. They firmly believed that Japan would win the war, therefore, did not see why they should take sides with the U.S. Many of our long time friendships were broken like that. Some of the cooks were in the so-called 'No-No' group. They didn't treat us nicely. You know, the children had snacks in the afternoon at the ringing of a bell. Now, the children of the 'Yes-Yes' group were often not served their share of snacks. Or at other times when sugar was found missing from the kitchen, the people of the 'Yes-Yes' group were charged of stealing it. Oh, a lot of those trivial things happened. Although we were all in one and the same camp, the difference between signing 'Yes' and 'No' inevitably created friction among a lot of us.

As you might know, some people eventually chose to go back to Japan with their children. There's a story of twin brothers who went to Japan when their parents decided to go back over there. They seldom had a problem feeding their mouths daily while they were over here; whereas, they had a hard time eating Japanese food. It wasn't to their liking. Later one of the twins died in Japan, perhaps caused by malnutrition or something. The other brother came back to the U.S. He said, "It wasn't my choice to return to Japan. My parents took me there with them. I couldn't live in Japan any longer." His mother was a very healthy person when she left for Japan, but when she came back here later, she

had stomach ulcer and passed away in one year after her return. She was only sixty (60) years of age or so.

Among those families that went back to Japan, I know a lot of cases where two or three family members are lacking now. They lost them. Sure, that's only logical. Because, for example, those children had plenty of food to eat while living over here, and when their parents took them over there, the Japanese people themselves were having tremendous problem finding something to eat. Now, how can a large family just hopping into that kind of situation, sufficiently feed all the members? After all, there going to Japan was a mistake in many instances.

Q. While in the camp weren't you verbally abused by the 'No-No' group people?

A. Oh, yes. They said we were incredible and something like "How can you possibly sign 'Yes' while being caged in such a place?" My husband cared less about all that he had left in Japan -- land, a new, big house, and all the property -- and instead said that he didn't want to go back to Japan since all our children were born in the U.S. He was right. I still don't see how he and I could be happy going back to Japan by ourselves and leaving our children in the States. We wanted to be with them. After all, they also went to schools here.

Speaking of those of the 'No-No' group, I've heard a lot about them. They went back with their little ones in most cases. And when their children grew up, they didn't like it over there, and thought of the fact that they were born in the U.S. and that it was their parents' choice to have left the country. They had no say when that decision was made, you know. I suppose it must have

been a hard time for the children. Many of those parents thought that Japan would welcome them. Oh, no. That was not true at all. As to the children, they enjoyed everything they wanted since they were born until they went to Japan, and all of a sudden they found themselves in severe shortages of everything. A lot of those families -- in some cases, children only -- eventually returned to the U.S. And when they did at last, they were then in very poor health. They finally came back to the States all right but their health was so damaged by then. I went to several funerals of such people and some of them were my acquaintances. I felt pity for the innocent children that came back by themselves and got sick. There was nothing they could do to help themselves -- someone had to take care of them.

Q. I hear that some young people went to the war from the camp.

Weren't the families of them made bad remarks about it?

A. Yes, in some instances.

Q. Did any of your sons volunteer to enlist in the service?

A. Well, it wasn't volunteering as such. Our son was drafted while he was in Detroit. At the time he was drafted the war was in full swing. Whenever I heard someone went to the war, the next thing I knew about him was that he was killed. So there was a funeral service almost everyday. My husband desperately wanted our son to not go to the war right then. And then, we learned that if he were to become a Japanese interpreter, there was a chance that his departure date to a battlefield could be delayed. I think by eight (8) to ten (10) months, probably by about ten months. So he applied for it and by the time he did go, the war was all over. We were very lucky. Had he gone to the war right away when he was drafted, it could have been the last time we saw him alive. The

later he went to the war the more chance he had of surviving.  
that was my husband's thinking.

- Q. How was it in the camp when it became clear that Japan was losing the war? (As it was obvious from the response that follows that she misunderstood the question. Just to match the response, the question can be changed to read: "How did you people in the camp come to know that Japan was losing the war?"
- A. Several responsible people were publishing newspapers in the camp, and there was a bulletin board for general communication purposes, so a lot of us knew Japan's defeat was coming.
- Q. How did the 'No-No' group react to the news?
- A. "Japan's only pretending to be losing!" They just did not believe anything as it was and insisted that Japan would win.
- Q. But you and your husband knew the truth?
- A. Yes, we did.
- Q. How did you feel when it became a fact that Japan lost the war?
- A. Well, during the Russo-Japanese war my husband was in Russia with the Japanese Army. One night in the battlefield he fell off a cliff or something and hurt himself very badly. After the war he came back to Japan and the wound became worse and worse. After a while in Japan, he came over here. He knew he had to work hard to send money back home, but yet the wound which was by his leg remained painful to him. He used to tell me that he had a hard time of it. For a while he stayed in a hospital here, which cost him a lot. If it were in Japan, he could have taken advantage of some sort of military benefits. Seeing the people through the hospital windows walking happily, he once told me, he kept thinking that as soon as the pain was gone he would have to work harder than

before and with gratitude. He then went back to Japan and had an operation. This was all before I met him. Even after the operation he suffered from the very pain, sort of periodically by the years. Anyhow, while in Japan he received military benefits, having served in the army and fought for Japan. So it's no wonder that he would side more with Japan. However, since all of our children were born here and naturally they all liked this country, he thought he couldn't help going along with the children's decision.

Q. How did other people react in the camp?

A. Everybody kept quiet and didn't talk much about it. A lot of people kind of feared that someone with an opposite opinion might pick on them if they talked too much at that time. Everybody kept silent.

Q. Now, from the camp where did you go next?

A. When we were leaving, we received thirty dollars (\$30.00) a piece, including the children, to cover whatever expenses that might occur in the short period of time to follow. We came back straight to Sacramento where Rev. Igarashi had already started a church.

Q. That was at the Christian Center, wasn't it?

A. Yes, that's right. At the Center we fixed ourselves coffee and snack, and then Mr. Satow, who came back to Sacramento before we did, took us in his tractor to his home. He had as big a family as ours. And on top of that, the children were right at their prime age for playing. Even though I kept telling them that they shouldn't do this or they shouldn't do that, nothing could stop them from doing anything. When I think of all these things, I cannot but sincerely believe that Mr. Satow is a true Christian, and so

is his wife and his brother. We stayed there for nearly two years, and in the meantime my husband went to work from there. When he passed away, Mr. Satow read a message of condolence at his funeral. In it he said that while he was still asleep very early in the morning, he would hear my husband already walking outside to go to work and that he was a very hard working, serious man.

Q. When was it that your husband passed away?

A. A long time ago . . . seven (17) years ago, in 1957.

Q. When did you buy this land?

A. After the war while we were still at the Satow's. Because of the size of the our family, we didn't think it polite to stay there for too long a time.

When Japanese people came back from the camps most of us didn't have houses to return to. So, some people took shelter even in rain-leaking barns and slept on haystacks. Situation was that bad. Mr. Robinson wanted us to go back and work for him. He wanted us, not anyone else, and didn't accept any other workers. From his past experiences with unskilled workers, he knew that he wouldn't be able to do as good a business with new workers as he would with us. While we knew that if we accepted his offer, we were guaranteed of a comfortable living unlike other people, we decided at that time not to go back to him. People laughed at us for refusing such a nice offer and said of us that we must be out of our minds.

Yet, we stayed with the Satow's, and from there my husband went to work, and at the same time we looked for a new place to live. After checking a number of places, we found one that we almost decided to buy. Then, out of nowhere we heard of this fifty-

acre land. We liked it very much at the first sight.

I am so grateful to our two oldest sons, I can't appreciate enough. I know of some young people who didn't like their large families and went to work somewhere and never returned. The ones that were left home were the old and the very little ones. Our oldest son did have a good job, but yet he came back here. Being an experienced electrician, he found a job when he came home and worked from three (3:00) to twelve o'clock (12:00) at night. Then in the mornings he used to get up early and helped us in the fields. I used to find the lights on in his room until late at night after he came back from work. One night I peeked into his room for the lights never went off that night again. He was reading a book. The younger son finished his school in Berkeley, but he not able to go to college. I remember he was ordering a lot of books, and he was studying them at home. Later he went to Washington and was licensed as an engineer. He deserves what he has now. He really worked hard. When the second oldest son came back from the military service, he saw what his brother was doing and said to me, "I'll help you work in the field for one year." At that time I thought that getting out of the service, he might have lost his interest in school. Anyhow, he stayed home and helped us for one year. With the savings he made during that year he went back to school in Berkeley.

(INAUDIBLE) When he started his school again, he used to tell me that however hard he studied, he could not comprehend as well as he used to. He made it in the end, though. On Friday nights he came back here from Berkeley, and on the following Saturdays

and Sundays he worked in the strawberry fields. Then on Sunday evening he went back to Berkeley on a six o'clock bus. All my children worked hard like that one way or another. At the same time, I have to say, it wasn't an easy thing in any sense for them to continue their schools.

It was in 1952 that they brought me air tickets to Japan. I wasn't quite ready at that time, but they said, "Mama, you had enough hardships. Why don't you visit your parents in Japan while they are still alive?" So I did. Well, it has been thirty (30) years since I left.

Q. I understand you are still working now.

A. Well, yes. It took my husband a lot of pains and toil to buy this land, so I don't think it's right just to let it stand idle.

Q. How many grandchildren do you have not?

A. Well, a lot of them.

Q. As an Issei yourself, what would you like to pass on to them?

A. I would like them to learn Japanese. Well, maybe it's unrealistic. I believe it best to be honest, just, and to study hard. Don't be insolent and conceited. When you think to yourself that you are wiser than the others, you are very likely to go wrong. One who is self-important and talks big is the worst person you can be. They say in Jpn, "The lower the wisterias hang their heads down, the more upwardly people look up to them." The same is true with us human beings. The more humble you are, the more you will be looked up to. To think highly of yourself more than you actually are is the worst attitude you can have.

Q. What was your family religion?

A. Buddhism, or Shinshū-sect.

Q. While you were in Japan, did you hear of Christianity?

A. No, since I was living in the countryside. If I had lived in a city, then I might have.

It is very hard to own property in Japan . . . owning a land, building a house to live in and doing whatever on one's own. Therefore, what the parents and ancestors accumulated for generations is handed over to their children and that makes a difference. In a case where the parents have only one son, they might think over who is going to be his wife and succeed to what they have as property. Over here hardly any parents think over such matters, but in Japan it is that way. It's nearly impossible to make property in one generation over there without help from the parents. Whereas, over here everyone becomes independent and lives all on his own right after getting married.

Well, Japan today is not what I remember it used to be like. It has changed a lot in recent years. In the old days, for example, farmers bought human feces to use in the fields as fertilizer. But, nowadays city people pay the farmers to have them disposed of. I think that's the way it's supposed to be.

(INTERRUPTION)

We Issei's have gone through tremendous toil and hardships and most of us tried our best to even look after the parents back in Japan. People in this country don't take care of their parents to that extent. The Japanese of the Meiji era, I for one, are exceptionally unusual in that we were taught in school to honor "filial piety to parents, fraternity among brothers and sisters, harmony between husband and wife." There used to be a moral

science class when I was in school. Today in Japan school children are not taught such a course, and that's probably why they do not know how to behave. The time has changed.